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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 004832

SIPDIS

STATE FOR OES/OMC FOR STETSON TINKHAM, EAP/RSP/TC

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USDOC FOR NOAA/NMFS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EFIS](#) [TW](#) [ESTH](#)

SUBJECT: ICCAT SANCTIONS AND FISHING BOAT PROBLEMS: A VISIT
WITH DEEP SEA FISHERIES DIVISION DIRECTOR

REF: A. Tinkham/Chang email of December 1, 2005.

[B](#). 04 TAIPEI 4074

[C](#). TAIPEI 4788

[1](#)1. Summary. December 1 AIT/T Econoffs visited Council of Agriculture Deep-Sea Fisheries Director Tsay Tzu-yaw to discuss recent sanctions, upcoming meetings and the USCG request to board a Taiwan fishing vessel. Tsay said the sanctions were too severe and the Taiwan response is still pending. Econoffs emphasized that Taiwan should remain a member of the International Convention on the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) and should try to satisfy ICCAT's requirements. Tsay referred future requests for boarding Taiwan fishing vessels to MOFA. Action request in para 12. End summary

ICCAT sanctions

[1](#)2. Econ Chief and ESTH officer visited Tsay Tzu-yaw, Director of the Deep-Sea Fisheries division of the Council of Agriculture Fisheries Administration on December 1, 2005 to raise the issue of recommendations by the International Convention on Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) to reduce Taiwan's big-eye tuna catch by 70 percent. Tsay said the decision was a harsh one. He said that despite remonstrations by the Taiwan ICCAT delegation, strict penalties were imposed that Taiwan would find very difficult to accept. Tsay emphasized that the Taiwan delegation at the Seville meeting found it hard to accept the ICCAT decision. He said that the Fisheries Administration Deputy Director was in Kaohsiung consulting with Taiwan's fishing industry on Taiwan's response.

[1](#)3. Econ Chief, drawing on points in ref A, said that ICCAT's decision was fair from the U.S. point of view and that Taiwan needed to stay engaged with ICCAT and manage its fishing fleets to prevent overfishing. Tsay mentioned that the Fisheries Administration could impose on errant Taiwan vessels, fines and revocation of fishing licenses from 3 months to a year. In severe cases licenses could be taken away indefinitely.

[1](#)4. Comment: Tsay's statement that Taiwan has yet to make a decision on how to respond to the ICCAT sanctions is surprising because senior Taiwan officials have already made public statements citing the need for Taiwan to improve its management of Taiwan fishing fleets and for Taiwan to accept the sanctions. On November 21, local press articles reported that Premier Frank Hsieh (Chang-ting) said that Taiwan is willing to comply with international fishing regulations. On November 23, Fisheries Administration Director General Hsieh Da-wen said that Taiwan needed to improve management of its fishing fleet and comply with ICCAT rules.

[1](#)5. Tsay evaded AIT questions on the issue of Taiwan vessels registering with and fishing out of third-country ports. As reported in ref C, some Taiwan fishermen complain that the sanctions are the result of failure by Taiwan officials to regulate Taiwan-owned vessels that operate out of third countries; that law-abiding Taiwan-flagged vessels are punished while no effective measures are taken against vessels flying flags of convenience. End Comment.

WCPFC

[1](#)6. Tsay said it was possible that Taiwan could face further sanctions at the upcoming WCPFC meeting in Pohnpei, Micronesia. He said that Taiwan could learn valuable lessons from the U.S. experience in reacting to reduced quotas for catching blue fin tuna in the 1990's. He asked for information on how the U.S. had handled industry concerns and downsizing its tuna-fishing fleet.

[1](#)7. Tsay said that Taiwan is concerned about the boarding and inspection procedures for its fishing boats operating in the western Pacific. Taiwan is concerned that it not be

treated any differently than any other members and asked for U.S. confirmation that the same procedures are used.

18. Tsay said that Taiwan favors good management of tuna stocks in the western Pacific and supports in principle U.S. proposals tabled for the upcoming WCPFC conference for the conservation of northern albacore.

19. Tsay said the Taiwan delegation to the December 12 meeting would like to discuss with the U.S. delegation rules and procedures governing the scientific committee, technical committee and the northern committee to confirm Taiwan delegation's understanding of these rules. Tsay said Taiwan's delegation would exceed 10 people, including industry reps and official delegates. The delegation will stay at the hotel Yvonne (contact tel: 30-5130).
Suspect fishing vessel

10. AIT/T raised the recent incident involving Taiwan suspected narco-trafficking vessel Shin Yeou No. 16 off the coast of Colombia and a USCG request to board the vessel. A Taiwan interagency group recommended to allow boarding, but the final decision was stalled by MOFA. To date AIT/T has not received a formal response from MOFA on Taiwan's final determination. The boat was boarded by Colombian authorities for illegal fishing in its EEZ and taken to Cartagena. On board were six illegal aliens. MOFA North American affairs director Leo Lee told us on Nov. 30 that the Colombians had identified the undocumented aliens as one Vietnamese and five PRC nationals. Lee also said no other evidence of illicit activity has been reported. Lee indicated that the undocumented aliens boarded the F/V via the "go fast" boat that had originally attracted the attention of the USCG patrol aircraft.

11. Tsay said that future requests to board Taiwan vessels should be sent to MOFA for action. Tsay was surprised that AIT/T had not received any formal response from MOFA.

12. Action request: AIT/T requests Washington agencies guidance to respond to Tsay's request for information regarding 1) U.S. experience in responding to sharp cuts in quotas (para 6); 2) Taiwan concerns about procedures for boarding and searching vessels in the Pacific (para 7); and USdel interest in meeting the Taiwan delegation in Pohnpei (para 9). End action request.

PAAL